UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1999/441
19 April 1999
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

LETTER DATED 18 APRIL 1999 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 16 April 1999 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq, giving details of a fresh Turkish incursion into northern Iraq that began on 7 April 1999 and calling on the United Nations to meet its responsibilities, to halt the aggression to which Iraq is constantly being subjected and to urge the Turkish Government to comply with the norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Saeed H. HASAN
Permanent Representative

Annex

Letter dated 16 April 1999 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 21 February 1999 addressed to you (S/1999/196, annex), I should like to call your attention to the fact that on 7 April 1999 units of the Turkish armed forces carried out a fresh incursion into northern Iraq. These units were from a special-forces battalion of the formations stationed near Iraq's international boundaries, and they were supported by helicopters and by groups from the village gendarmerie. They penetrated Iraqi territory to a depth of 15 kilometres on the pretext of being in pursuit of Kurdish Workers' Party guerrillas in the Zakho-Amadiyah area. The incursion has caused serious losses in terms of lives and property to Iraqi citizens among our Kurdish people in the area, to say nothing of the damage done to public property. The force in question also proceeded to search the Wadi Kayshan, Wadi Bagham, Kari Halis and Jabal Khantur areas, and it was supported by a number of the Turkish tanks already on station inside Iraqi territory.

The Government of Iraq condemns in the strongest terms this violation of its territory and airspace by the Turkish armed forces, and it calls upon the Turkish Government to withdraw its invading forces from Iraqi territory forthwith and to desist from any repetition of practices that are incompatible with relations of good neighbourliness and the principles of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. The Government of Iraq further rejects outright the pretexts advanced by Turkey to justify such incursions into northern Iraq, given that the alleged pursuit of elements that pose a threat to Turkish national security does not make it legitimate for Turkey to implement a policy that is entirely at odds with its declared commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

Turkey's distress is fundamentally due to the persistence of the anomalous situation that was created by the United States and the United Kingdom in the area in cooperation with the Government of Turkey itself.

The Government of Iraq reserves the right to seek compensation for the damage caused by these unlawful actions, it renews its call to the Government of Turkey to put a halt to operations that violate Iraq's sovereignty and place its security and integrity in great jeopardy, and it urges Turkey to give concrete expression to its professed respect for the norms of good neighbourliness between States.

As I express the hope that the United Nations will fulfil its responsibilities as stipulated in the Charter and will halt the constant intimidation and aggression to which my country is being subjected, I request you to do your utmost to urge the Turkish Government to observe the norms enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law by withdrawing its armed forces from Iraq's territory forthwith.

I request you to have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Mohammed Said AL-SAHAF
Minister for Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Iraq